

Tuesday, June 15, 2010
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As President Obama prepares to address the nation this evening...

Carnahan Has Called for BP to Stop PR Campaign, Dividend Payments and Focus on Fixing the Leak and Repairing the Economic, Environmental Damage

(WASHINGTON, DC) - Amidst damning reports indicating that BP made multiple decisions in the days leading up to the Deepwater Horizon explosion to ignore warnings and sidestep industry guidelines, Congressman Russ Carnahan (MO-3) reiterated his position that BP should refocus its attention on stopping the leak, cleaning up the oil and repairing the economic and environmental damage being done - not on marketing campaigns or payments to stockholders.

In a letter to BP's CEO, today Russ Carnahan and 31 U.S. House members joined President Obama and 54 Senate colleagues calling for BP to setup a \$20 billion independently-operated account that would pay the full costs of the environmental and economic disaster created by BP's actions.

"These new reports make it clear that BP caused one of the worst economic and environmental disasters ever because they were trying to pad profits," Russ Carnahan said.

"It's their responsibility to clean up the mess, which means plugging the hole and paying for the enormous devastation they have caused.

Their first interest should be the people they have hurt, not stockholder profits."

A Congressional investigation indicates that at multiple points in the days leading up to the April 20th explosion, BP ignored internal warnings, violated industry guidelines and took fatal shortcuts that directly led to the fatal blowout and subsequent oil spill. According to internal company emails and other evidence, these decisions were motivated by a desire to finish the well quickly in order to cut costs.

Carnahan has cosponsored HR 5355, which repeals liability caps, making BP and other oil companies - not taxpayers - responsible for the full cost and adverse economic impacts of their mistakes. He has been urging his colleagues to support the legislation to hold BP fully accountable.

"Taxpayers must not bail out big oil for their own mistakes," said Carnahan. **"This is BP's responsibility and they should bear the costs for their actions. BP can promise all day long that they will cover all the costs, but the stakes are far too high to just take them at**

their word."

Last week, the U.S. House with Carnahan's support passed a measure to allow the U.S. Coast Guard to obtain one or more 'cash' advances from the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund, which is funded by an 8-cent tax -

paid by oil refineries -

on each barrel of oil.

Under current law, the Coast Guard can only draw up to \$100 million from the fund to finance emergency response efforts after an accident and that money is about to run out.

Today's letter is copied below:

Tony Hayward
Chief Executive Officer
BP
1 St James's Square
London
SW1Y 4PD

Dear Mr. Hayward,

As BP board members debate whether to issue a second quarter dividend payment, we renew our call to suspend the dividend and, further, we urge you to direct such funds to an escrow account dedicated to cleaning up the Deepwater Horizon spill and compensating its victims.

Your company has affirmed its intention to pay the full costs of this devastating environmental and economic disaster. As those costs continue to rise - to \$37 billion, by one estimate - the American people require an assurance that your company will be able to honor all legitimate claims.

President Obama and 54 members of the U.S. Senate have called for the establishment of an independently administered \$20 billion escrow account, which would be available to cover cleanup costs and economic damages. We join them in their request and further call on BP to divert future dividend payments to this account until such time that all cleanup and compensation costs are fully covered.

Sincerely,

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